#### **BENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM**

P.O. Box 426 218 1st Street North Sauk Rapids, Mn 56379

Phone: 320-253-9614 Fax:320-253-9614

E-mail:bchsmus@bentoncountyhistorical.com

Preserving the Past for the present and the future

We are on the web! http://mnbentonhistory.org

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS, STAFF VOLUNTEERS AND MEETING INFORMATION

President: Ernie Wollak Vice-President: Char Dhein Treasurer: Renee Kampa Secretary: Jean Stark Director: Pat Gerchy

**Board of Directors** 

Director: Jim McMahon

**Director: Randy Schafer** Director: Merle Stowe

**Director: Lorane Walsh** 

Board Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30pm unless otherwise posted on the front door of the Museum Building.

Meetings schedule can change by Board motion and approval. Meetings may also be cancelled due to inclement weather and this information will be posted at the museum.

<u>Staff</u>

Jack Toliver – Military Support Miles Christie-Data support Meredith DePree-Office Support Mary Ostby- Executive Director

**Volunteers** 

Fred Joesting – Research

Andy Schwalboski- Research & Displays Caren Kalenda - Oral Interviews & BCHS

tour and Data Support

Bob Kalenda- Data Support Wendy Wheeler- History Mystery, Where's Wendy & Photography John Stafney- Website & Database





# WOMEN IN HISTORY NOMINATIONS 2014

Benton County Historical Society is looking for nominations for our Annual Women In History recognition luncheon! We will hold the luncheon in March 2014 as part of the National Women History Month Celebration as we do every year! The 2014 theme for the National Women's History month of March is: Celebrating women of Character, Courage and Commitment.

Every year we accept nominations from the Benton County Community for women who live in Benton County that have contributed their talents to bettering the lives of Benton County residents.

Now, bettering the life of Benton County residents comes in many forms! Nominations in the past have come from many areas, so.... maybe they raised an exceptional family, cared for family or friends in hard times, volunteered for local churches, schools, helped with other community organizations, served in the military, worked in the area or owned a local business. Anyone have ideas of women come to mind yet?

All the women that we have honored in the luncheons in the past have been described with some and/or most of these words: dedi-

cated, good-natured, humble, caring, hard working, committed, sharing, unselfish, patient, friendly, loving, involved, loyal, trustworthy, responsible, compassionate, honest, respectful, funny (laughter is good medicine), gracious, dependable, supportive, generous, talented and kind. There are

more descriptors, but you get the point and I know our community members know where and who these women are!

So, I am again asking for help to find them and nominate them for our 2014 Women In History celebration. You can write a short bio on the woman of your choice, call me at 253-9614 and I will ask some questions and jot some notes down, or you can email me the information at: bchsmus@bentoncountyhistorical.com. We would like all nominations in by the third Tuesday in January Board Meeting so that we can go through nominations and choose our honorees! Thanks to all the members who have helped with this throughout the years!

#### Special points of interest:

- Benton County Fair Book and Pictures -page 4&5
- Cindy O'Konek-Grants-page 6
- ECE Grant page 6
- Lyndon Johnson Agates-page 7
- Donations/Acquisitions page 8 & 9
- Raymond Brother page 9
- Executive Director Corner-Page 10
- Membership Renewals page 11

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BCHS NEWSLINES

### BENTON COUNTY FAIR BOOKS

We have for sale; the Benton County Fair 100 Year Anniversary Books at the museum! They are \$25.00, which is an exceptional deal for these hard cover, 335 page books!

The Benton County Fair Board received a grant that allowed them to keep the book price down for the people of the community area to have access to their local history. The project dollars that were provided by the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund, from the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment through partnership with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. This grant lessened the book price for the consumers.

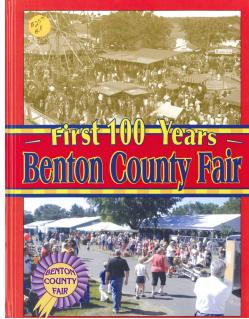
The Benton County Historical Society provided the history of the Benton County Fair start-up year (1913) and the early years, when the Agricultural Society incorporated (1852), from the files of BCHS historian, Ed Sowa. The Centennial Book committee then carefully selected pictures, newspaper articles and information from the community from over 100 years of activities, events and happenings. I was part of the Committee to do the books and they are excellent!

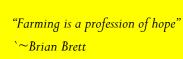
The Chapters and Contents include: Outstanding Senior Citizens, Century Farms, Heritage Building, Watab District Number 2 Schoolhouse, Grandstands, Carnivals, Concessions & Refreshments, Fair People-Fair Memories, Appreciation Dinner, The Ballroom, FFA, Open Class, 4-H, Military Days, and Benton County Fair History from 1913-2012. There are many Benton County Fair Events ads, colored pictures and something to interest everyone!

The book are for sale at the Benton County Historical Society(253-9614), Benton County Fair Board Members or the Stearns County Heritage Museum until they are sold out. If you are interested,

them for Christmas presents, because when they are gone, they are gone!

Right: Benton County Fair Book





# MUSEUM TOURS, RESEARCH AND TRAVEL REQUESTS

We are open from 10am-4pm Monday through Friday .We are happy to try to work with scheduling outside of our scheduled hours and will work to set up an appointment for you. If you have need for a child or adult group tour, or have research to do after hours or due to a travel schedule, please give us a call at 32-253-9614 or send us an email at : bchsmus@bentoncountyhistorical.com.

**Upcoming Holiday Closings:** November 11, 2013 (Veterans Day) November 28th and 29th, 2013 (Thanksgiving and Day after) and Christmas (23rd and 24th) January 1, 2013, January 20th, 2013– these are scheduled at this time.

NOVEMBER 2013 PAGE 11

### 2014 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Hey Everyone! It is that time of year when I try to get word out about Membership Renewals. We always put the renewal form on the back page so that if you would like to cut it out and send it in, then you will not lose the other articles in the newsletter! We have published "early" renewals in the newsletter for the past couple of years and people have responded! Everyone has a chance to renew before the New Year if they choose to. We have had a pretty good

If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday. ~Pearl Buck

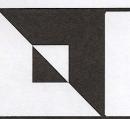
response because of the hectic holidays season, travel and family events going on. We save on postage costs by doing renewals using the newsletter too.

If you do not renew by January 1, 2014, we will send you a letter reminding you of renewal! (New member that joined in the second half of the 2013 year we carry that over for the 2014 year.)

We have not changed the membership amounts for 2014! We hope that you will renew your membership for 2014 and join us for another year of Benton County History!

Any questions; give Mary a call at 320-253-9614 or email me at: bchsmus@bentoncountyhistorical.com
The renewal notice is below if you choose to use it!

Our mailing address is: BCHS PO Box 426, Sauk Rapids, MN 56379



# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL SLIPS 2014

Household		<u>Business</u>		
□ Seniors	\$9.00	□ Annual \$50.00	Name:	
□ Single	13.00	□ Supporting 75.00		
□ Family	18.00	□ Maintaining 100.00	Address:	
□ Contributor 27.00		□ Patron 150.00	City: State:	Zip Code;
□ Supporter	50.00	□ Benefactor 500.00	Citysuitc.	
Make your check payable to: Benton			Phone:	2014Membership Dues!
County Historical Society or BCHS.			Email:	

Thank you for your continuing support of Benton County Historical Society and Museum!

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BCHS NEWSLINES

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CORNER**

Welcome to Fall/Winter season! The Russell Arms Apartment gardens out our back parking lot are all done, the last lawn mowing was done, and there is snow on the ground as I type. I guess we are ready; or not! Myself; not ready....

I made it through the Benton County Fair schedule; always a pleasure to meet everyone and share the local history and stories! There was a lot of interest in the Sartell Paper Mill information and that is great to see as the Paper Mill was a large part of the Benton County area history! A sad loss to the area for employment, and a loss for the local history with the demolition of the buildings going on.

We are still working on scheduling oral interviews and collecting information. Please pass the word on out in the community! I should also state that the Paper Mill is not the only thing we are working on! If you have people or persons that you know that you believe should participate in oral interviews about local history or may have information that they would like to share on other items, please pass the word out about us and our mission to save the local history!

I really would like to take the time to say "Thank You" to all our volunteers, our staff, the Board Members, the BCHS Members and the community of Benton County for supporting the organization and moving us forward into the 2014 year. The organization is making progress towards goals that were sometimes, almost impossible. We are exceeding the goals we set in some areas and have others started on their way! Thank You to all who help us do that!

Since it getting close to the holidays, I would like to wish all our BCHS Members a great holiday season ahead of time! Holidays are all about families getting together, sharing some good food, some good conversations and making memories! ( At least that's what I hope they are



for you!) If you are working on genealogy, it is also a pretty good time to ask some questions about relatives, or get some great pictures! Anyway, all of us here at BCHS the Board Members, Staff and Volunteers are sending out the biggest and best Holiday Wishes we could for you and your families! Till next newsletter! Wary Ostby

#### ST. CLOUD RETIRED TEACHERS- THANK YOU!

The Watab District Number 2 Schoolhouse is voluntarily staffed by the SCREAM (St. Cloud Retired Educators Association Minnesota) organization during the Fair Week. Joyce Wittenhagen is extremely organized with scheduling the teachers, so that I do not have to find many volunteers for

staffing the schoolhouse and the teachers that volunteer their time and energy are the best at educating the public on the history of a one-room schoolhouse!

SCREAM has a great bunch of educated, dedicated and caring group of teachers who participate in our programming every year! A HUGE Thank You to those teachers and people involved with the organization that make a difference in the visitors lives! I hear many comments on the wonderful experience the schoolhouse has to offer stepping back in time and memories!



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## ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

We held the Annual Meeting on September 17, 2013. Elections for the Board Members was held with a few members present and **Lorane Walsh** and **Pat Gerchy** were re-elected to the Board for another three-year term. Director **Jim McMahon** term is also renewing. He is appointed by the Benton County Board of Commissioners as a representative Board Member and so is not up for election, just renews the term for three years. The Executive Board is staying the same for the 2014 year: President: **Ernie Wollak**, Vice-President: **Char Dhein**, Treasurer: **Renee Kampa** and Secretary: **Jean Stark**.

We, as usual, had some great history conversations, a light supper and a productive meeting for the members, staff and Board Members present. We had no programming this year due to scheduling conflicts with the speakers that I had talked to, but there is always next year. I apologize to everyone that the date was not on the letters that I sent out. We had the copier down for a couple of days and I was running behind when we got it serviced. I was having to move fast to get everything done and that usually causes mistakes and this was one! I was holding a copy of the last newsletter looking at the date that I had written in there, when I was working on the letters, and I forgot to transfer the information of the date to the Annual Meeting letter! Thanks to all who called and let me know that it was not there! Thanks to all who called and let me know, as I only caught it after I mailed all the letters!

#### **RENEWED AND NEW MEMBERS!**

Mark Ebnet Family 2013-2014-NEW! Cindy O'Konek and Chris Sherba– 2013-2014-NEW! Ken & Gail Phillipi-2013

Mary & Steve Ostby– 2014

Caryl Walters - 2014

In every community there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart there is the power to do it. ~Marianne

Thanks to all the members who renew every year! We have placed an early renewal on page 11 for the 2014 year renewal. Membership dues are not due until January 2014, but we try to get the word out early enough because of the holidays! If you would like to send yours in, just head on over to page 11 and find the renewal form! Thanks!

#### **NEW ED SOWA BOOK ALMOST FINISHED!**

Ed Sowa was an amazing Benton County historian, who left some unfinished history in notebooks when he died. Ed combed huge amounts of hard-copy newspapers to find the smallest details in the area newspapers about Sauk Rapids and the area surrounding the city. People, Businesses, Locations, Deaths, Development, Births, Accidents, you name it; Ed probably had some detail about it. Marjean Keehr started sorting items from notebooks and transcribed much of the notebooks; Fred Joesting took over sorting, organizing and compiling and we are hoping to have the book in print form by the first of the year! Ed left a marvelous legacy in his books of information, we will be happy to see this one brought to publishing for the community!



Ed Sowa legacy- books

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BCHS NEWSLINES

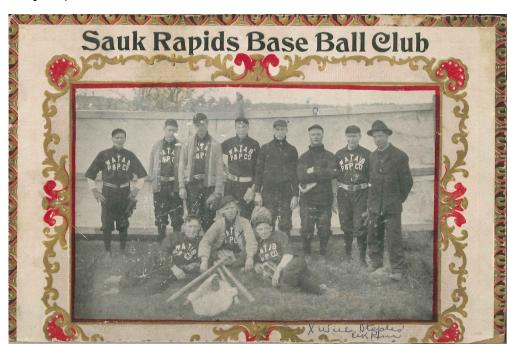
### BENTON COUNTY FAIR 2013- SARTELL PAPER MILL

We had a great time talking to people at the Fair this year! Our focus was on gaining information and history of the Sartell Paper Mills over the past 100+ years of history. We had a lot of interest in the displays of pictures and information covering the 1980's expansion, the original pictures of the brick buildings and met many who were willing to share information or come in to BCHS and do oral interviews.

Most of the people we talked to only remembered St. Regis, Champion, International and Verso. We were fortunate to talk to people who "knew" people that they could contact for the transfer from Watab to St. Regis. (1940's) **Caren Kalenda** has already started the oral interviews with the people that worked at the mill and so we are grateful to get the information before it is forgotten or lost. Our fair displays opened avenues to much information and resources, and we are thankful that we had the opportunity to talk with everyone. Thanks to all who participated already and will do so in the future—our history is only as good as the people who care enough to save it for the future generations!

#### SAUK RAPIDS BASEBALL TEAM AND WATAB PULP AND PAPER COMPANY

We try to add a little bit of history to the newsletter and when we were working on the Benton County Fair display about the early years of the Watab Pulp and Paper Company, we found something pretty interesting! We have a wooden cigar box top that was donated and on the top is says "Sauk Rapids Baseball Club." When you flip the cover over, there is a picture of the Sauk Rapids Baseball Club players in their uniforms and their uniforms say "Watab P & P Co." What we found interesting is that the dark green seal on the bottom right picture says the tax seal is dated March 2, 1901 and according to the records we have, the stocks were not sold until 1905 to build the paper mill. That gives a 4 year planning and lead time that the Watab Pulp & Paper Company was already out in the community and sponsoring teams and making themselves known! Were it not for someone's wisdom to keep this lovely cigar box cover, and donate it, we would not have known to look farther back in the newspapers and records for more information on the set-up of the company! Items like this make a world of difference for people who would be writing books, or documenting the history of a company and we were pleasantly surprised to see it dated!





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### **DONATIONS (CONTINUED)**

Helen Habas – 1960 Phone Book

Bill Plafcan- Champion Paper Mill Coffee Mug

**Lori Buegler**– Horse Blanket from the Otto and Anna Buegler Farm in Minden Township

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." ~Mother Teresa

Barnes Family of Willmar – Special Fire Brigade Jacket worn by Zelma Barnes who worked at the Paper mill and was employed in security and as a

member of the Champion Paper Mill Fire Brigade, Zelma handled communication and coordination of fire events.

**Mary Wallin-** Sheet Music that was for the piano; word and music by Naomi (Holroyd) Larson from the Foley area.

Stephen Carter – 2 photos of the Benton County Historical Society exterior building – 8x10 and 3x5

Mel Schroeder – 2 Large Boxes of School Books

**Father Charles Kunkel OSC–** Gohman Family history book– the third generation

Wendy Wheeler - Verso Sartell Paper mill Cooler

Anonymous – Anna Gottwalt photo album and 1920-1940 Census copies

Judy Hoofnagle– Muffin Pan, Baby Changing, women's nightie, Salt N Pepper Shakers, 2 Harker's Pottery Serving Bowls

**Sauk Rapids Community Ambassador Organization** – Sauk Rapids Pageant Buttons, Sauk Rapids "Rapidsfest" T-shirt

Julie Tadych- Moulzolf- Picture of Cecilia Jedlicki in jacket, jacket with fur trim, dress with cover and belt

**Cora Stahn**– Dr. L. H Stahn Electrocardiograph machine and Blood Pressure cuffs from his practice, picture of their home on Highway 95 and short history of Dr. Shahn's career.

Mark Graves – Sartell paper mill pictures and literature

### RAYMOND BROTHERS- EAST ST. CLOUD

James Eisele of Minnesota Metro Truck History contacted us because they had a painting done by Elaine Carlson in 1999 of the Raymond Brothers original trucks used for transporting in the area.

According to James, they started with horse and wagon, moved to the mechanical truck and then to the large trucks. The Truck History organization donated the original painting they had done and some numbered prints and postcards.

We have it hanging in the museum and really could use some history on the Raymond Brothers Transportation business to put in the files. We know they were located by the East Side Target location of today, but could use more information on the business. If you can help with information, please let us know!



"Trucks in Time Minnesota '99

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### **DONATIONS**

Connie Duea – Sartell Mill Centennial 1906-2006 book, Auditor's Receipt, Union Souvenir Program-Run of the Mill Champion Paper mill Newsletters, Training Packet, Champion Deck of Cards

Lillian Dullinger- Baptismal Gown and Baptismal Blanket of Cyril Palmersheim

Sharon Cairns - Military Overcoat, Military Rain Coat, Military Blues Uniform, 2 Boots, and socks

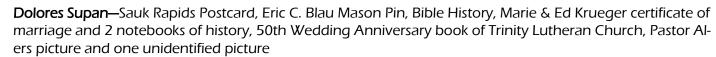
Elaine Fleck – Fleck Election sign, 1948 Homecoming Queen Crown, County commissioners Award, NW Bank Award-Sartell Office, 1951 Foley Falcon Yearbook, Sauk Rapids Indian Days Wooden Nickels, Foley Courthouse Picture, Grandfather's Glasses, Benton County Sheriff's Department Mug, 121st MN State Fire Conference Mug, Norwest Bank Mug, Brass Glass mug- First Women County Commissioner

Cliff Johnson – Three Yard Sticks – Huntington Auto Parts, Bob Kosloske Motors, Czarnetski Hardware, Sauk Rapids American Legion Grand Opening Mug, TCHS donation card, Sermon on Depression cassette tape-Trinity Lutheran Church, Mobil Products, Rice MN, Country Kitchen Coin Purse, David Neron Painting, St. Augustine Choir & Orchestra Album, VFW Post 6992 Chip, Beadreau's Bar East ST. Cloud Church Cookbooks-Stearns/Benton Association, Trinity Lutheran, First Presbyterian Foley, Sauk Rapids Jaycees, church of the Sacred Heart, Vote One Marriage Sign

Florian Mastey- Certificate of Citizenship Jacub Mastey Oath for Citizenship, Mortgage Note- Jacob & Helen Mastey, 4 Mortgage Deeds, 1 Mortgage Note, 2 Support Agreements for Mortgage, 4 Warranty Deeds, 2 Quit claim Deeds, 2 Satisfactions of Mortgage, 1 Assignment of Mortgage, 1 contract for Deed, 2 Bill of Sale 3 Receipts, 2 Temporary Occupancy Statements.

**Buzz Wheeler**– Champion Safety Award and Champion Safety Award Towel

Marge Nierengarten- Green Giant, 3- Dreamsicles, figurines, 2 Bells, St Cloud Game, Salt N Pepper shakers, note pad with Aunt Jemima, Bird Figurine, 2 crocks, Vietnam Memorial Picture



Violet Downer – 1960's Doris Day Color Book

Minnesota Metro Truck History – James Eisele-painting by Elaine Carlson 1999 a painting of the original vehicles used by Raymond Brothers Transportation East St. cloud- postcards, and prints

Bill & Kathy Holroyd – Moonshine part, potato masher, Small & Large hand flour sifters, scissors, 1972 Hoards Dairyman Magazine, 2 tin containers, forged pincers, perm curlers, jar opener, cow medicine device, abacus, pie plate/bowl, platter and needles package

Fay Schreder – Local author brought in 3 Books – A Place To Call Home, White Clover blossoms, and Schreder Time In Our Own World Benton County based stories of her family and life.

Mary Agnes Shimota – St. Frances Telephone Corporate Seal, Annual Reports, Accounts Payable, Customer List, List of contracts for telephone equipment, telephone equipment contracts, workmen's comp and insurance statements, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, both from various years, stock certificates, meeting Minutes, Gene Shimota military uniform and Morning Report Book from the Korean War, 1973 Juror Calendar Benton, 10 postcards and 2 x-mas cards, Bowling Team shirt and picture, copy of current events newspapers used for teaching in country schools, Gregg Writer Steno Book, Country school activities list, Daily Missal, Foley fund Days and Dave Henry Election buttons, suspenders, 3straight straps for sharpening razors,

President Woodrow Wilson picture

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### **BENTON COUNTY FAIR 2013!**



Right: Some really good-looking Lefse makers and some GREAT tasting Lefse for the people attending the Thursday morning Fair! →



Left: Volunteer Fair Book Sellers Nancy and Sandy are smiling



Right: Tri County Bee Keepers always put on an educational and very informative demonstration on honey extraction!  $\rightarrow$ 



←Left: Anita – Demonstration of spinning wool has people engaged and asking questions!



Right: Lyndon Johnson with his Benton County Agate collection gets a "rare" break from the visitors; just in time for a picture!



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BCHS NEWSLINES

# EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC GRANT SUCCESS!

Benton County Historical Society owes a great big "Thank You" to East Central Electric's Operation Round Up program and the people who contribute to the program from the community!

The Operation Round Up Trust was established in 1997 and is made possible by generous East Central



Electric members who choose to have their monthly electric bill rounded up to the next dollar. With members gifts ranging from one penny to 99 cents per month, the members that participate in the program have a convenient way to donate resources that go back to the community to benefit the local service organizations.

We recently received a check (just this week in fact!) from East Central Electric's Operation Round Up program and we were awarded a \$500.00 grant for the purchase of a digital camera and a digital recorder! This will help us to provide wider services in documenting history for the Benton County area through oral interviews and photographs. It also means some improved technology that will make it easier to organize and process our resources.

#### CINDY O'KONEK- GRANT WRITING VOLUNTEER!

Huge thanks to **Cindy O'Konek**, a new volunteer and a new member of Benton County Historical Society! Cindy contacted the museum and offered to volunteer with anything we needed help with at the museum. I talked to her about many opportunities here at the museum, but she said she may be able to help with the grant writing process. The key words she said were "may be able". I found out that not only is she "able"; she is excellent at it!

Cindy worked for Stearns County History Museum and has some experience in putting together paperwork, along with some great organizational skills and understands the items that are important to success for a museum! She and I have been working by email to get the grants done for the items that we have needed to help us move forward and be efficient. I am so grateful that she has the time and made herself available to do the research on grants available and requirements so that they can be processed. I fill the gaps with the items that are necessary for running successful programming at the museum and the background on the history with details for the information requested. It's working and already successful! As you read above, we just received a check from ECE and Cindy was instrumental in making that happen!



the last newsletter, I wrote about the absolute need for a digital scanner and asking for donations. Cindy sent out a grant for the digital scanner that we so desperately need. We are awaiting an answer and will let the members know the next newsletter. We are also completing a grant for women, men and children's mannequins, along with a map storage case to organize the cemetery, township and city plat maps. We are hoping for success as we continue to move forward.

Special thanks again to Cindy for her willingness to volunteer with us! She does certainly qualify for another "angel" sent to BCHS to volunteer for us!

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## **UPDATE ON "MACHINE MANIA"**

In the last newsletter I wrote about the machine trouble we had been having. Maier Typewriter came through with some bottled microfilm toner that they found in the market and so, one (the older of the two microfilm machines) is running temporarily. Thank you to **Ed Maier** for taking the time to track down the toner to get the microfilm running again! I know this was a miracle to find it because I was looking on the internet, calling suppliers and no one had it, but Ed found it; he ordered it and delivered it to us! He also said we may have "the last bottles of that toner on earth." I don't doubt it! .Thanks again Ed ,and I am working on not having to need any more if at all possible!

The newer of the two microfilm machines is not useable at all at this point. No luck in finding parts yet.

We did get a \$500.00 donation towards the purchase of a digital scanner and Cindy O'Konek and I have a grant out there is cyberspace, waiting for an answer!

The copier has been fixed, the computer is too, so we are 3 out of 4 up and running again!

We are still accepting donations for the digital scanner and for the purchase of a computer and monitor to go with it. It is a very worthy cause!



### LYNDON JOHNSON AGATE COLLECTION 2014

Sauk Rapids resident, Lyndon Johnson will have his Agate Collection in the museum during the months of January and February for display. We will be open some extra Saturdays during those months and those additional days will be posted in the next newsletter as well as on the website and the front door.

Lyndon has been here the last few years with his Agate Collection, which is one of the largest in the world! He is very knowledgeable about types, colors, size and mineral contents. Lyndon also does public presentations on Agates for schools, libraries and has written a book: *Lake Superior Agates What to Look For Lyndon's Story* that is available for purchase through him, or us.

He always welcomes people coming in to ask questions, see the collection and or bring in your "rocks" to share with him. He is great resource to explain "why" or "why not" rocks are agates and the agate collecting is a great part of our Central Minnesota history. It is a collection that should not be missed as 98% of the agates are from Benton County and the other 2% are from Stearns, Morrison and Sherburne counties. So, if



you know of someone who has not seen the collection, has interest in Agates, or would like to talk to Lyndon when he is here; send them our way in January and February!

Left: Lyndon's Eye Agates

